

**W A R R A N T
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

**TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Berkshire, ss:

To either of the Constables of the Town of Williamstown or any other such designated person in the County of Berkshire.

GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the Town of Williamstown qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs to meet at Williamstown Elementary School, 115 Church Street in said Williamstown.

On **TUESDAY, THE TENTH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2013 AT 7:00 O'CLOCK P.M.** for the following purpose:

Proceeding: Moderator Adam Filson opened the Special Town Meeting at 7:00 PM in the gymnasium of the Williamstown Elementary School, 115 Church Street. Two hundred and thirty two (232) registered voters checked into the meeting.

Article 1. Acquisition of The Spruces Manufactured Housing Community

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by gift, purchase, or eminent domain that portion of The Spruces Manufactured Housing Community property lying within the Town of Williamstown, as shown on Assessors Map 112-19 and further described in a deed recorded in the Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds, Book 1069, Page 1014, and, further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to grant a restriction on the property for such purposes and conditions as may be required under the terms of the Grant Agreement between the Town and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or take any other action in relation thereto.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends passage of this article.

Majority vote required.

Passage of this article allows the Town to assume ownership of The Spruces, probably in early 2016. Morgan Management has agreed to accept \$600,000 from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant to pay off their mortgage on the property, provided the Town accepts responsibility to operate the park during the grant performance period, relocates the park tenants, and takes title to the land in 2016. In return Morgan Management has agreed to donate \$4.1 million of their grant proceeds to cover the Town's costs to compensate tenants under the Manufactured Housing Act, demolish and dispose abandoned trailers, and remove the recreation hall, apartment building, and infrastructure. Any balance remaining will be available to the Board of Selectmen for affordable housing. Thus far \$2.6 million of a projected \$3.0 million has been designated for the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development/Berkshire Housing Development Corporation project on land donated by Williams College adjacent to Proprietors Field. The volunteer Spruces Land Use Committee is developing a re-use plan for possible active and passive recreation, agriculture, and open space uses.

Proceeding: Jane Allen, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen moved, and seconded by Ann McCallum, of the Spruces Roof Group, the town vote to adopt Article 1. There being no discussion, the Moderator declared Article 1 carried by unanimous voice vote.

Article 2. Lease Agreement with Morgan MHP Mass LLC

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease agreement with Morgan MHP Mass. LLC to operate The Spruces Manufactured Housing Community located on Assessors Map 112-19 on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen deem in the best interest of the Town, or take any other action in relation thereto.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends passage of this article.

Majority vote required.

This article authorizes the Board of Selectmen to lease and operate The Spruces Manufactured Housing Community. The Town would do so during the FEMA grant performance period ending March 28, 2016. Tenants will be expected to continue to pay rent. Income from the current 65 tenants at a typical \$250 is \$16,250/month. All income will be used to cover operating expenses. The park will continue to pay taxes (\$1911/month), water-sewer bills (\$2750/month), and electric bills for public areas only. Tenants pay their own utility bills. As occupancy declines in anticipation of closure, rental income and expenses will decline to zero.

Proceeding: Jane Allen, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen moved, and seconded by Ann McCallum, of the Spruces Roof Group, the town vote to adopt Article 2. There being no discussion, the Moderator declared Article 2 carried by unanimous voice vote.

Article 3. Authorization of Revolving Fund

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to G.L. c. 44 s. 53E½ to establish a revolving fund, to be known as the Spruces Revolving Fund, under the authority and direction of the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of operating and closing The Spruces Manufactured Housing Community, which fund shall be credited with receipts of all revenue, fines, and fees collected during the operation of The Spruces, such expenditures not to exceed \$142,652 per fiscal year, or take any other action in relation thereto.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends passage of this article.

Majority vote required.

A revolving fund will allow income from the park to be held in an account separate from all other Town funds. Park operating expenses will be paid from this account.

Proceeding: Jane Allen, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen moved, and seconded by Ann McCallum, of the Spruces Roof Group, the town vote to adopt Article 3. There being no discussion, the Moderator declared Article 3 carried by unanimous voice vote.

Selectmen David Rempell lauded Town Manager Peter Fohlin for his diligent work over the past few years working on the grant application for the Spruces. Mr. Fohlin received a standing ovation from the audience.

A motion was made, and seconded, to adjourn the Special Town Meeting at 7:12 PM.

Hereof fail not and make return of this Warrant, with your doings to the Town Clerk on or before the time set for holding said meeting.

Given under our hands this 25th day of November, 2013.

Signed/Jane B. Allen, Chairman
Thomas Sheldon
David Rempell
Ronald Turbin
Jane Patton
Williamstown Board of Selectmen

Berkshire, ss:

I hereby certify that I have posted attested copies of the above Warrant in four public places in the Town of Williamstown and the Post Office, at least fourteen days before said Special Town Meeting.

Signed/ Paul E. Yarter, Constable

November 26, 2013

A true record, attest:
Mary Courtney Kennedy
Mary Courtney Kennedy, Town Clerk